


Cambian Devon School

Curriculum Policy

Senior Leader responsible for managing this policy	
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Legal Status:

Regulatory Requirements, Part 1, paragraph 2(2) (i) to (x) Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

Applies to:

- The whole school inclusive of activities outside of the normal school hours.
- All staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

Related Documents and Further Reading

Policies on: Examination, RSE, Feedback and Marking, SEND, SMSC

DfES guidance on curriculum: www.gov.uk/national-curriculum

Purpose:

- To establish a consistent curriculum framework across Devon School.
- To support a smooth transition into further education or employment.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum offer, which inspires students to learn.
- To promote positive attitudes to learning.
- To promote the behaviour and welfare of students, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To promote preparation for and an appreciation of life in modern Britain.
- To provide a range of subjects and courses to help pupils acquire/improve their knowledge, understanding and skills in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, human, social, physical, sporting, creative and artistic learning.
- To provide opportunities across the whole curriculum for pupils to develop the necessary skills to make progress in reading, writing, communication and mathematics.
- To supplement the formal curriculum with extra-curricular opportunities for students to extend their knowledge and understanding.

Introduction

- The curriculum at Cambian Devon School is comprised of all the activities that are organised to develop learning and to promote personal growth and achievement for our individuals. The uniqueness of each individual is recognised and valued – we put the individual at the centre of our curriculum. This provides the basis for the development of an ambitious curriculum that is personalised to meet the needs, interests and aspiration of our individuals.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and governors, families and carers, professionals and other stakeholders a comprehensive document outlining the philosophy, aims and values as well as the approach to the design of our curriculum.

Context

Cambian Devon School is an independent, co-educational, DfE registered day school for up to 30 individuals aged 7 – 18 years, who have social, emotional and/or mental health needs, often presenting with behavioural issues.

Pupil profile:

- Some individuals have had several educational placements before coming to us.
- For the vast majority of our individuals, their previous experiences of school, learning and the curriculum have all been quite negative. They are often disengaged or exhibit poor learning behaviours as a result. As a result, they are likely to have gaps in learning and to be working below age related expectations (ARE).
- The vast majority of our individuals will have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) with social, emotional and mental health difficulties as their main presenting area of special needs and are funded through their local authorities.
- Our individuals often have issues with subjects being taught in a traditional manner. The curriculum is therefore adapted to reflect a bespoke approach to individuals' needs.
- In-year referrals mean that the size and dynamics of every teaching group change during the year.
- Our individuals need dependable, trusting and appropriate relationships in a nurturing environment that guide, reward, motivate and inspire them. They require fair and consistent boundaries to help them engage appropriately with staff and peers and to make positive choices and become responsible citizens in the future.

Intent

Vision

Our vision is to work collaboratively with students, families and the school community in order to create a respectful and compassionate school community that fosters a life long love of learning to empower everyone to be the best versions of themselves. We build the foundation for this learning through meaningful relationships, effective communication and engaging learning opportunities. We challenge ourselves and each other to be reflective individuals in order to equip our students with the skills they need to be proud of the contribution they make to their community. We strive to create an environment we have confident and self-aware students who feel valued, respect one another and have the strength to face new challenges. We inspire our students to become ambitious learners and individuals, who have the confidence to take learning risks and recognise that every mistake is a learning curve that can lead us to the right path.

At Cambian Devon School we have designed our curriculum with individuals' learning at the centre with the common goal of working towards our whole school vision. Our school curriculum has been designed to be broad and balanced, meet the framework of the National Curriculum to prepare students for formal qualifications, promote students natural curiosity and inspire a life long love of learning. An integral part of our curriculum is to offer students new and exciting experiences through a range of classroom based and off site

activities that are designed to build resilience, confidence and self-esteem. We also offer a range of therapeutic interventions to ensure that students are equipped with the skills and strategies that they need to be able to thrive in their life after school and make positive contributions to society. We recognise that individuals should be challenged in their education - learning from failures and celebrating successes. We have designed our curriculum to be empowering, enabling individuals to develop their interpersonal skills, creativity and independence. All teachers and professionals engaged in teaching and learning activities are partners in learning and strive to continuously develop their skills and competencies for providing an appropriate range of strategies to inspire all our individuals.

We recognise that students have a range of learning needs but primarily, many students have missed large aspects of their education prior to attending Devon School and so they often begin their education here with attainment levels and skills that are significantly below average (for their age and starting points).

The aim and values of Devon School are focused on maximising every individuals' potential to develop into a confident, secure, well-adjusted and skilled young person who will make a positive contribution to society and live as independent a life as possible.

Devon School delivers a differentiated curriculum, which is closely aligned with our pupils' levels of ability, interests and aspirations. It is broad, balanced, and relevant to needs and designed to have integrated therapeutic support as necessary and a focus on developing resilience and preparing pupils for the next stage in their lives. This specialist curriculum is tailored to our pupils' individual needs and based on a person-centred planning framework.

Implementation

The national curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and engaging lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum. It provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens of modern Britain and introduces them to the best that has been thought and said; and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

Planning

Robust planning is carried out for each subject area and includes 2 stages of planning: long term and medium term. Our broad and balanced curriculum gives due consideration to differentiation, progression and provides sufficient depth and breadth to allow all individuals to deepen their understanding.

Our long term planning is in the form of yearly learning journeys for each year group. These are used across the school and are displayed all in learning spaces, these provide students with a visual prompt of what they are learning, what they have already learnt and what they are going to learn next.

Our medium term plans are in the form of schemes of work, these are broken down into small units, ideally lesson by lesson, these give an outline of the learning objective, the teaching input and the student activities. Long term planning documents are submitted annual and medium plans are submitted termly to the curriculum lead.

Teachers make on-going assessments of each pupil's progress and level of attainment, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to consider the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. When planning work for pupils with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEP).

The underlying principle of our curriculum implementation is flexibility, we have a curriculum which is designed to meet the needs, interests, aspiration and aptitudes of our students. Our curriculum model ensures that we have flexibility to fit in with our students rather than our students fitting in with our model. Our conceptualised curriculum draws on best practice and delivery from a number of different models and approaches. We recognise that as our school population changes, so must the way in which we approach planning, teaching, learning and assessment. Our curriculum map continues to change and evolve to meet the individual needs of our children each year.

In order to provide pupils across with experiences that are relevant, interesting and challenging, and to identify opportunities for progression, we have adopted a curriculum structure which encompasses three broad pathways: 'National Curriculum, Functional skills and a Vocational curriculum.' This offer means we can make subtle distinctions between not only groups of learners but also the degree of curriculum formalisation they will experience in either building the prerequisites for, or working within, a more 'conventional' National Curriculum type approach.

The levels are not defined by age, but by need and achievement; children are therefore able to move flexibly from one pathway to the next at any point during their school career. Each pathway covers skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of areas of learning, and they are blended together, so as to facilitate a 'learning flow' between the two.

Because of the personalised approach to the curriculum we are able to meet the needs of all our learners. All children across the school focus on targets based on the outcomes in their Individual Learning Plan. Some pupils receive additional funding e.g. Pupil Premium and the impact of any interventions funded through these is monitored to ensure that they support progress.

Assessment

Our assessments have a range of summative and formative approaches which are planned in order to ensure we have accurate tracking in place. We aim to use our cycle of assessment to ensure that we check individuals' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. This allows us to respond and adapt teaching as required.

Assessment for learning is embedded within each lesson. Teachers make on-going assessments of the individuals' progress each lesson and use this information to plan subsequent lessons to facilitate further development of knowledge and skills. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each individual's level of ability. Techniques used are:

Questioning – this enables the individual, with teacher support, to find out what level they're working at.

Feedback - each individual is given targeted written and/or verbal feedback about how to improve their learning.

Modelling – teachers will work on an exemplar with individuals, so they understand what successful work looks like for each task they are doing.

Self-assessment/Peer assessment – this encourages individuals to become more independent in their learning.

Summative assessments – end of unit tests, portfolios and exams are used formatively to help individuals improve.

We use past papers and GL assessments progress tests to give us accurate attainment data for the core areas of English, Maths and Science. For other areas of the curriculum we use past papers, practical assessments and end of unit assessments (summative assessments)

or learning descriptors. For practical subjects a portfolio of evidence may be used as assessment.

Termly Literacy and Numeracy baselines are carried out to ascertain reading, spelling and Numeracy ages for students, this data is then used to inform provision maps and Literacy and Numeracy interventions.

To further improve the teaching and learning in the school we track and analyse data using iasend or excel spreadsheets. This allows us to look at whole school progress and attainment data. We carefully assess the barriers to our individuals' ongoing education and plan effective support strategies to overcome these barriers, addressing vocabulary deficits, retrieval skills and helping them to close the gap between their current performance and where they want to be. We check understanding and use this to inform our planning to help embed knowledge and develop their understanding further, making explicit links between different parts of the curriculum and across curriculum areas to make knowledge transferable and practical.

Teaching and Learning

We offer high quality teaching at Devon School. Our small classes offer the advantages of individual focused teaching with a high level of resources and technological support for all individuals. The structure of a lesson is a 3-part approach with a starter, main teaching and plenary which encourages pace and assessment for learning.

Individuals are set realistic but challenging goals and are involved in setting their targets. We intervene to support individuals who underachieve and we seek opportunities to stretch the most able. This is based on a clear assessment of individuals' needs; intervention programmes are tightly focused on improving the progress and outcomes for individuals. Staff regularly engage individuals in conversations about their learning and time is set aside for individuals to reflect upon where they are and where they would like to be. Lessons at Devon School use a range of teaching styles to best support students progress. Lessons are as practical as possible as our learners find this particularly engaging and implement any additional support or provision that is outlined in students EHCP.

Impact

At each stage of their education our students are prepared for the next stage whether this be further education, employment or training by equipping them with requisite knowledge and skills regardless of their disadvantages. We also prepare our students for appropriate qualifications to ensure positive destinations. We recognise that qualifications are vital outcomes and we work hard to support our students in achieving well but equally recognise the impact our curriculum has on developing resilient, caring, well-rounded, culturally aware citizens who understand the contribution they can make to society.

Our curriculum provides for student's broader development, encompassing their interests and talents; it develops their confidence, independence and resilience – their very character.

The curriculum enables our students to recognise the dangers inherent in the inappropriate use of social media and mobile technology, to recognise unsafe situations and how to avoid these. Students are taught about online and offline risks to their wellbeing and safety: criminal and sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, domestic abuse, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism and are aware of the support available to them to enable them to keep safe and to recognise and form healthy relationships.

Through our curriculum design we develop young people with an understanding and appreciation of diversity, of social justice issues and of fundamental human values. In addition, our curriculum develops and deepens individuals' understanding of the

Fundamental British Values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance. This allows students to thrive together and to recognise and respect the differences that make each one of us unique.

Equal Opportunities

Our curriculum is designed to provide equal access and opportunities for all individuals in the school. We adapt the curriculum to meet the needs, aspirations and abilities of individual individuals. Across the curriculum, provision is made to stretch the most able individuals, to address gaps in knowledge and skills and facilitate the learning of individuals with SEND needs.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Our school complies with all legislative and best practice requirements to meet the special educational needs of individuals. The majority of the individuals within our settings arrive with a history of special educational needs and individual requirements already identified. If an individual displays signs of having additional special needs, the teacher makes an assessment in consultation with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and, in most instances, is able to provide resources and educational opportunities that meet the individuals' requirements. If an individual's need is deemed as requiring additional support, consideration is given to involving appropriate external agencies, stakeholders and special support teachers. We always provide additional resources and support for individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Where an individual has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) the school ensures that the education he or she receives fulfils its requirements and participates fully in the Annual Review. We ensure that all objectives in the EHCP are monitored and evaluated (please refer to SEND policy). The school provides a provision map for each individual. This sets out the nature of the special needs, and outlines how the school will address these needs. It also sets out targets for improvement and progression, informed by the EHCP objectives so that we can review and monitor the progress of each individual. The plans are reviewed termly to inform improvement and progression.

English as an Additional Language

For individuals with English as an additional language, we are committed to providing the necessary support and resources so they can fully access the curriculum. There is a policy and established practices within the school to provide progression in line with other individuals (see EAL policy).

At Cambian Devon School we give particular emphasis on the development of the essential skills and knowledge through the promotion of experiences in the following areas

Linguistic (including English and Literacy, but encompassing all areas of the curriculum)

This area is concerned with developing individuals' communication and interaction skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading for pleasure is encouraged and modelled. These skills are most overtly brought into focus in lessons in English, and also in Literacy. The teaching of literacy and literary skills is not, however, confined to these subjects, and the policy of the school is that teachers of all subjects will encourage good linguistic and literary standards in all individuals' work.

Mathematical (including Mathematics, Science, Catering)

This area helps individuals to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics should be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion.

Scientific (including science, Catering, Forest School)

This area is concerned with increasing individuals' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

Technological (including Art and Design, IT and Catering, Vocational studies, Duke of Edinburgh)

These skills include information and communication technology (IT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products and evaluating processes and products.

Human and Social (including Geography, History and Religious Studies, PSHE, SRE, careers)

This area is concerned with people and with their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. Subjects contributing to this are include; Geography, History and RE. In our school our topic based Personal, Social and Health and Economic (PSHE) education alongside a knowledge and understanding of the world makes a strong contribution to this area.

Sex and relationships education

Students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The programme for the School's Sex and Relationships Education is available to parents/guardian/carers. It forms a key part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) subject area and has regard for the government's guidance in Sex and Relationship Education Guidance. In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents/guardian/carers may withdraw their pupils from any other part of sex education provided, without giving reasons.

Physical (PE, sports)

This area aims to develop the individuals' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Individuals should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. All students are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education/Sports programme. Students can only be excused from these lessons for medical reasons, for which communication from a parent/carer will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

Aesthetic and creative (including Art, Music)

This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects of all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including art, music and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses.

Careers

Careers is delivered following the Gatsby Benchmark, students have the opportunity to take part in work experience and receive independent careers guidance.

Political education

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced and discussed at different points and opportunities. Issues are presented in a balanced manner and will challenge students to think carefully and respect others points of view.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

This policy statement and the declared values of Devon School are enhanced by the linked qualities of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development. The school is non-denominational, where pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. This SMSC policy statement links and strengthens other policies so that the ideals of the school's ethos and mission statement become a reality for its students. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHEE and religious education make a strong contribution. Students are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. We actively promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Our school:

- Leads students towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity;
- Enables students to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community;
- Takes steps to ensure that students appreciate racial and cultural diversity and how to avoid and resist racism;
- Ensures that students are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships and personal safety;
- Enables students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Encourages students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life;
- Provides students with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- Assists students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and others' cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions;
- Encourages students to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and
- Precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school.

Project Compass

Project Compass is Cambian Devon Schools vocational centre, this complements the more academic offer from Paignton. At Project Compass students are offered a variety of vocational and enriching opportunities to support their personal development. Students have the opportunity to take part in Catering, Forest School, Thrive, Project work, Careers, ICT and Duke of Edinburgh Award. All students have access to provision at Project Compass as it forms part of our core curriculum offer. Project Compass aims to give students the opportunity to experience a variety of enrichment opportunities that allows students to discover their own strengths and interests, setting them up for post 16 options.

Auditing our Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we compare with similar schools?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?

Self-evaluation and development is a crucial part of the schools managerial role and teachers will input into the development as well as pupils own feedback.

When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- the impact of the curriculum on pupils' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- the contribution of the curriculum to the school's particular ethos and aims and the impact on pupils' academic and personal development and well-being
- how well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon pupils' prior experience and plans for progression
- the extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our secondary pupils and the views of our pupils, parents/carers and staff
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Effective Teaching - Expectations of Staff

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:

- having high expectation of students
- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods
- ensuring that students are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire students
- involving students in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging students to evaluate their personal achievements
- developing students' skills to become independent learners
- encouraging, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment and our reward system
- working in partnership with students, staff and parents/carers to achieve shared goals.
- keeping parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their students progress through reports and mentoring days

The Curriculum Lead carries out book appraisals, whereby books are checked for consistency of marking and being up to date. Planning appraisals are also carried out, where planning is checked to be up to date and evaluated. All teachers are observed working with classes at least twice per year, teachers that are evaluated to be working below a good are observed half termly and support is put in place to ensure that the standard of teaching is good.

The teacher and the observer follow the observation with a discussion. The observer notes the strengths and areas for development, and gives a copy of this information to the teacher. The Headteacher uses the information gained from this monitoring process to help identify common development points which can be addressed in the school's training programme for continuing professional development.

Direct observation must be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate the impact that teaching has had on pupils' learning. Such additional evidence should include:

- observing some lessons jointly with senior staff before discussing them also with the teacher who has been observed

- discussing with pupils the work they have done and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods
- discussing teaching and learning with staff
- taking account of the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and
- scrutinising the standard of pupils' work, noting:
 1. how well and frequently marking and assessment are used to help pupils to improve their learning
 2. the level of challenge provided.